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ABSTRACT

The Adult Learning Program Service (ALPS) aims to reach eight and a half million adults between ages 25 and 44 and teach them reading and math skills they can use at home and on the job. ALPS proposes to reach those who have never finished high school but do have at least a sixth-grade reading level. They could use their new skills to prepare for high school equivalency tests, to receive special certificates from local businesses and labor unions, or to qualify for better jobs or further education. ALPS will use radio and television to reach its audience at home, at work, in union halls, at YWCA's, and other places. It plans to use some of the same techniques as "Sesame Street" to capture and motivate its audience. But before programs are produced (target date: September, 1973), several tasks must be completed: gather more information on the projected audience, do curriculum research, create liaisons with public broadcasters and adult educators, plan quality programs. The biggest problem, though, is figuring out how to get the people and institutions of each locality to help with promotion, group-viewing, tutoring and counseling, or offering rewards to participants. (JK)

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PRESENTATION FOR N.A.E.B. CONVENTION

ON: Adult Learning Program Service (ALPS)

TO: PTV Managers
ETS Meeting - Cyprus Room, 4:30 -- 6 p.m.

DATE: Monday, October 18, 1971

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BY: Robert Carlisle
Director of Educational Projects, CPB

EM 009 984

(INTRO TO ITV VERSION OF NAEB PRESENTATION)

Two weeks ago, President Nixon announced Phase II of his new economic policy. During his talk, he cited some testimonials from citizens, who had written about his tightening the national belt.

CPB has a Phase II of its own ... a Phase II of our adult learning project ... which we're calling "ALPS", for short. If I may, I'll try to echo the President with a bourgeois kind of testimonial for ALPS. So, maestro, nostalgic music, please ...

AUDIO TAPE: PIANO MUSIC - RUNS 1:05

At the end of our very first meeting on ALPS ... last June ... the chairman of President Nixon's Advisory Council on Adult Education ... Leonard Hill of Nebraska ... spoke up. He said: "this is an opportunity. You can't run away from it. We're hurting in the fifty states." ...

A month later, Gary Eyre, the executive director of that same national council ... told us what people had said about the ALPS concept. In his words: "Thank God! At long last someone's really going to do something."

Then, a public broadcaster who's been in on the project almost since Day One sized up the

dimensions of ALPS in a paper he wrote. It was John Montgomery. He said: "Public broadcasting's next major educational thrust looms conspicuously as the most challenging ... effort ever to be faced... in the history of the industry."

And, only a few weeks ago, Helen Davis of WGTE Toledo, had one word for it when she began to think about the promotional demands of ALPS. She said ... Wow! ...

(TAPE APPROX. ENDING)

That "Wow!" is what I hope to explain to you this afternoon ...

BLACK SLIDE

About twenty years ago, a black named Jim Bishop dropped out of high school in Trenton, New Jersey. Here's what it felt like for him, for years after that:

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT:

(page 27)

(page 2 - II)

("There was a period of time when I was extremely frightened of education, frightened of an educated person ... it made me feel that possibly I was unable to compete, I didn't have what it takes to compete ..."

MAN ON BOAT, UNDER BRIDGE

It's a tough audience to reach ... these adults ... wondering why they can't compete. Again, Jim Bishop:

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT:

(Page 7 - II)

(" .... for a person to come out of the home, especially an adult ... when they can be involved in so many activities, and become involved in an educational program, takes a lot of motivation from the very beginning ...")

I think we can say we're not blind to this, after six months of studying on a project we're calling ALPS ... Adult Learning Program Service ... What is it?

ALPS SLIDE

A pretty tall mountain ...

WHO IS AUDIENCE?

ADULTS 25 to 44

Who is our audience? A slice of the 109 million Americans over 25 ... more precisely, a group of about eight and a half million adults between the ages of 25 and 44 ...

ADULT LEARNING/ABE

They've never finished high school ... we're aiming at those in this group with at least a sixth-grade reading level ... so they're not strictly speaking in the adult basic category ...

EMPHASIS

The educational emphasis? On reading and math ... socially usable reading and math, presented

CONTEXT

in the context of the adult's job ... home ... and life-style ... This is not nineteenth-century stuff.

MALCOLM X

We're talking about reading Malcolm X, or maybe the sports pages.

ADDING MACHINE TAPE

And computations that sum up to life ... or the

GROCERY STORE

figure-scratchings of the grocery store ... and landlord's office. Life has got to write this curriculum in terms of real adults as consumers, workers, parents. But still, what's in it for them? Why bother? ... Well, we have to plan a series of options for the participant. One of them would be

GED ONE OPTION

that working on reading and math would strengthen the individual for the GED high school equivalency tests. And that could be an important option ... Jim Bishop decided to take the GED tests. Why?

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT

(page 8 - I) ("I felt I would need more formal training to bring about any changes I felt innately, any things that I felt I could really assist ... So, I, you know, thought it was just necessary for me to get more of an education.)

They're tough tests. But Jim passed. How did he feel afterwards?

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT:

(page 10, 11) ("I felt really great ... I ... you know ... it's hard to describe how I felt ... It was like a licence almost a freedom to be able to participate in something I was really anxious to participate in ... It was like a door was thrown open for me. Now I couldn't wait to really pursue what I really wanted to do ...")

Yes, GED can be a door-opener ... But ALPS would develop other options ... like receiving special certification from local businesses and labor unions ... or using the materials to qualify for a better job, or further education.

OTHER OPTIONS

MAN AT TV SET

With your blessing, we'd propose to reach audiences ... first off ... through radio and TV, at home. But ... more than ever, we believe the expanding technologies should be bolted into the project, for alternate uses ...

REEL OF TAPE

VIEWING GROUP

ALPS won't limit itself to home viewing. It would hope to reach people at work ... in union halls ... at clubs ... at YWCA's ... And its materials will

MODULE FLEXIBILITY

be modularized. Content will determine length. The key? Flexibility ... to give the station manager as many local options as possible.

These ALPS won't be climbed easily. There's the little problem of getting ... and holding .. an audience. Here's Jim Bishop's comment, as a man who now teaches adult high school:

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT:

(page 13 - I)

("I think that the person you find in the adult class, in the day time, or at night, as an adult, they probably have more obligations, they've got more obligations, more things they can be doing ...")

MOTIVATION

Motivation: ... when you think about it, you have to admire the size of that problem ... But people have been moving other people for half a century ... to buy things ... and sometimes ideas ... and to be aware of important programs like "THE TURNEDON CRISIS" ... or

STOCKING AD

TOC LOGO

SESAME STREET BUTTON

"Sesame Street" ... ALPS will have to make use of all of the same skills ...

DELIVERY CARTOON

One thing everybody's agreed on, so far: Take time to build the project right. Hence, we don't plan on delivering product until September, two years from now. But where are we today, and where are we going? ... We arrived at Base Camp One on August

BASE CAMP ONE

30th. We've received the OK from the CPB Board to move on toward Point Two ... We're due there next March first ... And here's our workload.

WANTED: MORE INFORMATION

First, we have to have more information about the people we hope to reach ... not as fuzzy numbers ... but in human terms. Leroy Miller has already begun this task. He's setting up a series of one-on-one interviews across the country.

CURRICULUM RESEARCH

... Then there's curriculum research. I've already been in touch with some public broadcasters about helping us with that aspect ... Meanwhile, we're going to invite consultants and public broadcasters to join together in brain-storming the problems of motivation and payoffs ... and marketing ... We see liaison with you and your colleagues as being of the greatest importance. We've already begun that process. And we also want to draw in adult educators ... and keep them informed and involved.

MOTIVATION

LIAISON W/PUBCASTERS

LIAISON WITH EDUCATORS

... As you can imagine, we're a long way from building programs ... What do we have in mind? This fellow again? ... with chalk dust on his Vitalis hairdo? ... Not likely ... We're just a bit complacent here. We know that people like you can

TEACHER AT BLACKBOARD

produce quality programs ...

UPSIDE DOWN SESAME STREET

upside down and sideways ...

MAGGIE

You'll put a leotard on a lovely body ...

NET OPERA

You'll produce singers with voices almost as good as a certain Midwesterner's ... In fact, you've shown you can stand on your hands, if necessary, to build a fine program ... Don't get me wrong: The programs will be ... as always ... hard to do. But we've got even bigger risks of avalanches in

MAN ON TRAPEZE

BLACK

other parts of the ALPS ... Jim Bishop zeroed in on just about the biggest of them all:

AUDIOTAPE SEGMENT:

(page 12-II)

(" ... the key factor involved in adult education and the relationship between the instructor and the student. The relationship is vital ... if progress is to be made on the part of the student ... how could a local station go about creating that type of relationship. That student in a tube.")

C CLAMP SLIDE

Here is where the clamp tightens. This is where we begin to breathe thin air.

NATIONAL-LOCAL

The fact is clear. We've been talking about a national project. But the local dimension ... which starts with you right here ... is bigger ... heavier ... more ominous ... Fine programs can be designed, produced, and if you concur, broadcast. But far and away the most critical function lies elsewhere.

It's finding ... and maybe even creating ... a system of capillaries reaching into the farthest extremities of the local community. Only through personal contacts ... pre-, during, and post-broadcast ... will oxygen be brought into the neighborhoods where this project will live ... or die, quietly and unseen.

Let me describe what I mean in terms of a single American city ... Toledo. Assume first that ALPS materials are in the works ... and Helen Davis and her cohorts are figuring out how to get the people and the institutions of Toledo to help ... with promotion ... or group-viewing facilities ... or personal tutoring and counseling ... or offering rewards to participants ... Toledo props up the southern border of Michigan ... It's on Lake Erie ... which means the city is a world port ... even if the lake isn't swimmable ... The city's grown twenty percent since '60 ... so the skyline is growing too ... and a skyscraper or so glisten in the sunset ... All that glass reminds you that Toledo is where glass manufacturing in the U.S. became big business ...

ROAD MAP

WORLD PORT

SKYLINE

MODERN OFFICE BUILDING

LOGOS SLIDE

HIGHWAY MAP

ROAD MAP (PERRYSBURG)

Major arteries in and around Toledo could help, in a way. Some adults might be persuaded to drive down to Perrysburg, where there's a vocational school trying to work with men and women ...

FACTORY

Toledo industry could be counted on to do its part. Owens-Illinois, for example, is considered a very community-conscious company. Its President, Raymond Mulford, would want to help ... actively ... not just with cash. And so might other firms ...

WILLYS PRODUCTION

UNION SLIDE??

like Willys-Overland. Maybe these companies would agree to collaborate with the unions in town ... The UAW -- for its part -- has a big Health and Retiree Center. It seems likely that some supplement to ALPS ... counseling ... or tutoring ... could be housed right there ...

ART MUSEUM

Toledo's Art Museum would be sympathetic to ALPS. It has the largest art-education program of any American museum ... but it's limited to teaching art and music ...

MODERN SCHOOL

Like so many cities, Toledo is having school troubles. A bond issue was turned down a few weeks back. Hence, the city's "lighted schoolhouse" program ... which could be a boon to ALPS ... has

been put on the shelf for now ...

UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

The University should be another point of support. It's into adult education already ... with

UNIVERSITY NEWS SHEET

a few courses for weak readers ... But, again, this presumes a lot. It assumes you can lift the participant out of his chair at home. Helen Davis ...

CHANNEL 30 LOGO

who runs Channel 30 in town ... spotted this problem right away. She figures WGTE would have to reach at least fifty percent of its ALPS audience solely at home ... Now they don't sleep much at WGTE. Through real hard work, Helen and two or three others have learned how to reach people ... and

VIEWING GROUP

how to promote ... This was one of the viewing groups Jane Shambaugh set up for Sesame Street ...

ADVOCATES CARD

Her mail piece for "The Advocates" won a series award for best realized publicity exploitation ... The people at WGTE already know ... as Jane puts it ...

VIEWING TO DOING

that it's a long way from Viewing to Doing ... and as dedicated as they are, the Channel 30 staff couldn't do it all. WGTE would have to draw on other

JAYCEES

strengths ... the Jaycees ... the equally dedicated Junior League ... and the libraries ... which may

SYLVANIA VIEWING CORNER

already have viewing corners ... and very early Helen Davis would set up a task force specifically for ALPS ...

ALPS PROJECT SLIDE

Here's how she sees it ... Under the Manager, a project coordinator ... and then four lines of activity ... On your left ... a coordinator of volunteers. At WGTE, he's a volunteer himself ... He'd be charged with reaching the various service organizations and enlisting their aid ... The staff Promotion Director ... on the next fall line ... would work with Ad clubs ... the Ecumenical Communications Commission ... and P.R. firms ... Meanwhile, the Education Coordinator on staff would open up the lines to all the educational institutions that could very definitely be plugged in ... And then ... on the right ... the Development Director would take charge of involving local business and industry ...

PARTICIPATE

In Toledo ... and in any other community that might use ALPS .. participate will be the key word ... Getting volunteers to participate so that adults ... at home ... will participate.

We feel we have to know a lot more about the

magnitude of this problem ... city for city ... and so we have just started a six-market study of community-service patterns ... transmission lines that could be useful to public broadcasters in extending the reach of ALPS ... Working with and through the local managers, we'll be assessing these patterns in markets as different as Los Angeles and the hills of Appalachia ... a million-citizen community like Indianapolis ... and a small University town. Once we're through, we'd hope to be equipped to suggest ways in which similar communities could fire up, well in advance of receiving program materials. You know, those testimonials I cited at the beginning weren't all that whimsical. They tell us a lot. Such things as some importantly placed adult educators think we ought to tackle the ALPS. We're not charging up the slope. Instead we're taking it step by step ...

MARKET STUDY (?)

DIFFERENT SIZED MARKETS

Those voices remind us ... also ... that we won't make it if we let down on involving people who are as critically concerned as you are.

Those voices epitomize, too, our down-deep realization that we're staring at a mighty big mountain range. John Montgomery's been around

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ANNAPURNA?

education and broadcasting for two veru full decades. You have to respect his judgment on how big a challenge ALPS is. Certainly I do.

In just a few moments, these voices will be buried under the sounds of this Babel on the Bay ... this haven for hedonists with its peacock parlors. Once a columnist wrote about Biami Beach that if he couldn't afford to see the night-club entertainers on stage, he'd take in the Fountainebleau lobby ... which was ... in his judgment ... every bit as good as the second-act curtain of "The Burning of Rome" ... It's all a bit unreal ... made out of cardboard ... as one commentator wrote.

ALPS ... for its part ... represents the hard, real world ... quite a contrast. It's a world peopled by adults who had it with school years ago ... but who very likely can't understand the small print of a health warning ... or driver's license application ... or product warrantee.

Should society let them drift on?

Could they learn from radio and TV?

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Would they pay any attention to public broadcasting?

How can we reach them ... at home ... insulated from new and different influences?

We are very grateful for this chance to explain ALPS to you.

We're here to get <u>your</u> answers to these questions.

* * * * * * * * * *

(ALPS booklets available. Split up in smaller groups; questionnaire before leaving room)